



United States Department of the Interior
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
Yellowstone National Park
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VIA EMAIL - NO HARD COPY TO FOLLOW

January 21, 2021

Memorandum

To: All Yellowstone Employees, Partners, and Contract Operators
From: Superintendent, Yellowstone National Park
Subject: Presidential Executive Order Notification- Mandatory Mask Requirement

In an effort to reduce the spread of COVID-19, the President yesterday signed an Executive Order (EO) requiring the wearing of face masks on Federal lands. This order also stresses and emphasizes the critical need for continued and stricter adherence to CDC health guidance pertaining to the virus.

Many of you have already asked questions about what this means and how it will be implemented. I highly support this action to increase our efforts in reducing COVID-19 transmission and keeping our workforce and visitors as safe as possible. I also have great confidence that the incoming team in Washington will soon provide national guidance on how they want this implemented and enforced at the agency and local levels.

In the meantime, the directives within the Executive Order are common sense and important. We all have an obligation and responsibility to each other to continue following CDC guidance, wearing masks, maintaining social distancing, and doing everything possible to protect each other. All of you have done a very good job under extremely difficult circumstances over the past year, however, many challenges remain in front of us.

The majority of our partners already have mask mandates in place within their facilities and operations, and a large number of NPS employees also wear masks continually. However, effective immediately, face masks are mandated within the boundaries of Yellowstone National Park for anyone entering any facility in the park. This means a mask will be worn when inside, around anyone, at any distance. Social distancing will be maintained, and appropriate signage will be posted on all facilities. Outdoors, all employees will wear masks while in proximity to other employees, partners or visitors and when recommended distancing cannot be maintained. NPS employees will also wear masks when driving government vehicles with other occupants.

There will be many questions and nuances that need to be analyzed and discussed as we work to implement this EO. For example, guidance on short-term exceptions (such as someone eating in an eating establishment) should remain consistent with our current practices. We will work closely with our teams in Denver and Washington to provide clarification and more detailed guidance soon, including what the Order means to visitors in outdoor spaces. We will also continue working closely with our local and state public health officials as we have during the entire pandemic. Overall, we have done a good job partnering with the public over the past ten months and gaining compliance with mask wearing indoors especially. I am confident that will continue as we look to expand these requirements.

It's our responsibility to work together with our teams, partners, and the public to keep Yellowstone accessible and safe to visit. A follow-up written directive will be forthcoming outlining more specifics. Thank you all again for your continued efforts to reduce COVID-19 exposures within our collective workforces and the visiting public.

Cameron H. Sholly